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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5121
INFO RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 0610
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 0513
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0255
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1561
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 8080
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 1093
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 4985
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM PRIORITY 0602
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 1032
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 004443

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/06/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [CE](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPAN: SUPPORTING THE CEASEFIRE IN SRI LANKA

REF: STATE 128399

Classified By: Acting Political Minister Counselor Carol Reynolds.
Reason: 1.4(B),(D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Japan is disappointed by the lack of progress toward peace in Sri Lanka and is reconsidering its approach to dealing with the LTTE, according to MOFA's Sri Lanka country officer. Tokyo is thinking of taking "tangible measures," likely declaring the LTTE to be a terrorist organization, if the LTTE fails to return to negotiations. Japan's Special Representative to Sri Lanka Yasushi Akashi has offered to travel to Sri Lanka this month to meet with LTTE leader Velupilli Prabhakaran before making any recommendation on how to proceed; Prabhakaran has not yet responded. In the meantime, Japan will press both sides to end the violence. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Per reftel instructions, Embassy Tokyo Political Officer met August 7 with Kiichiro Iwase, country officer for Sri Lanka in MOFA's Southwest Asia Division, to share talking points concerning the recent violence in Sri Lanka. Iwase reviewed Japan's long involvement in the Sri Lankan peace process, noting Japan's past strategy premised on the belief that economic development would convince the people that a better future lies in pursuing peaceful solutions to their grievances, rather than war. Japan has already expended approximately two-thirds of the USD 4.5 billion it pledged for economic assistance at the 2003 Sri Lanka conference. Tokyo and the lives of the people have been improved. Unfortunately, however, the peace process has not progressed as Japan had hoped.

13. (C) Consequently, according to Iwase, Japan is now rethinking its earlier decision to maintain "decent" relations with the LTTE. On July 24, Japan's Special Representative for Sri Lanka Yasushi Akashi gave an interview carried in the Sri Lankan press in which he indicated Japan is reconsidering its stance and thinking about taking "tangible measures" against the LTTE if the group does not return to negotiations. These "tangible measures," Iwase said, would include following the lead of other countries by declaring the LTTE a terrorist organization. Japan is aware, however, that the LTTE recently demanded that those countries in the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission who are members of the EU, namely Finland, Sweden, and Denmark, withdrawal from the Mission. Given the EU's recent determination that the LTTE is a terrorist organization, the LTTE now considers the three to be "hostile" and no longer impartial. Akashi has offered

to meet this month with LTTE leader Velupilli Prabhakaran, who the Japanese believe is the ultimate decision maker for the Tamil Tigers, before making any decision; Prabhakaran has not yet responded. An attempt by Akashi to meet with Prabhakaran last May was unsuccessful. In the meantime, Tokyo will continue to press all parties for an end to the violence, Iwase stressed in conclusion.

SCHIEFFER